Utah Program Improvement Planning System (UPIPS) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT SALT LAKE ARTS ACADEMY January 19, 2007

The attached report contains the results of the first two phases (Self-Assessment Process and On-Site Validation Visit) of the Utah Special Education Program Improvement Planning System (UPIPS). This Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process is conducted by the Utah State Office of Education (USOE) Special Education Services (SES), as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B. The process is designed to focus resources on improving results for students with disabilities through enhanced partnerships between charter school and district programs, USOE-SES, the Utah Personnel Development Center, parents, and advocates.

The first phase of this process included the completion of the Self-Assessment and the development of a Program Improvement Plan. The second phase, On-Site Validation, conducted in Salt Lake Arts Academy on January 16, 2007, included student record reviews, interviews with school administrators, teachers, students, and parents, and classroom observations. Parent surveys were also mailed to a small sample of parents. Information from these data sources was shared in an exit meeting attended by staff from Salt Lake Arts Academy.

This report contains a more complete description of the process utilized to collect data and to determine strengths, areas out of compliance with the requirements of IDEA, and recommendations for improvement in each of the core IDEA areas.

Areas of Strength

The validation team found the following:

General Supervision

- Students felt that special education services helped them succeed better academically.
- General education teachers were supportive of special education programs and want all students to succeed.
- Strong paraprofessional support is provided in both special education and general education classrooms.
- School climate at SLAA is friendly. Parents and students report a sense of connection and belonging.
- Special education files were very well organized and meet compliance requirements.
- General education teachers with more than three years experience were familiar with special education procedures and classroom strategies to identify and support students with disabilities.
- Special education service delivery is varied and flexible in order to meet the needs of the students.
- Positive school climate. Student work was displayed throughout. Students were easily moved from one classroom to another.
- Special education teacher participates in the general classroom with instruction and provides additional support to students without disabilities.
- Salt Lake Arts Academy has an emphasis on inclusion, but also provides a continuum of services to meet student needs.
- General education teacher is included as part of the IEP and eligibility team for students with disabilities.
- Students in the focus group were enthusiastic about the school. They stated that they receive opportunities to interact in the general education classroom.
- Students with disabilities are included in all activities.
- Tutoring program in place to provide additional academic assistance to students.

Parent Involvement

- Parents reported receiving copies of IEPs and Evaluation Summary Reports.
- Parents have been contacted via email, phone, and in writing.
- Parent signatures were documented on IEPs in reviewed files.
- Parents are allowed to participate in IEP meetings by alternate methods, such as conference calls.
- Consent for Initial Placement was included in all reviewed files.
- Teachers at SLAA report high levels of parent involvement.

Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment

- SLAA has a strong and responsive instructional program for students with disabilities.
- Files were organized, with backup information attached.
- Special education staff demonstrated a willingness to learn and apply that knowledge.

- IEPs include measurable goals that are linked to the Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) statements.
- IEPs included documentation on the participation of all required team members.
- Students with disabilities participate in the general curriculum and all extra-curricular activities.
- PLAAFP statements contained baseline data and how the disability affects participation in the general curriculum.
- Special factors and extended school year (ESY) needs were addressed on IEPs.
- Special education files were well organized and secured in a locking cabinet.

Transitions

• Salt Lake Arts Academy does not have students of transition age at this time.

Disproportionality

• There is no evidence that special education students are disproportionally represented.

Areas of Systemic Noncompliance*

- ✓ Timelines for reevaluations were exceeded.
- → Eligibility Determinations documentation not current.
- ✓ Need 1 SLP to provide speech/language services on IEPs.
- ✓ Copies to Parents of Evaluation Summary Report not documented.
- ✓ Notice of Meetings not documented for review of placement.
- ✔ Prior Written Notice of reevaluation not documented.
- ✓ IEP timelines were exceeded.
- ✓ No LRE data submitted to the USOE.

^{*}These areas represent items where the visiting team could not locate appropriate documentation of requirements of IDEA 2004 and Utah State Special Education Rules in student records or other data sources.